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THE GRAVE OF DREAMS

By

JAMES M. HAYES





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THE GRAVE OF DREAMS

AND OTHER VERSES

BY

JAMES M. HAYES

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*Why do I sing when many poets are making
Sweet melody?
Why do I raise my voice when they are taking
A higher key?
Why does the poor grass in the rose's garden
Bloom with the rose?
The meanest tree asks not the great oak's pardon
Because it grows.
Sublime the mountains stand in worship holy,
Sun-crowned, untrod;
May not the little foothills meek and lowly
Look up to God?
Because majestic rivers robed in splendor
Flow mightily,
Shall not the wayside streams their tributes
render,
Unto the sea?
Go ask the smallest of the stars of heaven
The reason why,
When shine the glories of the planets seven,
They light the sky.
The answer comes that all things seek expression
In earth and sky.
From flower to star, if all make this confession.
Then why not I?*

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THE GRAVE OF DREAMS

Where are the hopes, the longings and desires,
The dreams God gave me when my life was
young?

They are as dust of flowers the weeds among,
Sweet perfumed memories, the ash of fires,

The many voiceless strings of broken lyres,
The songs that in the long ago were sung.

Alas, within the grave of dreams they rest;
Blessed with sad tears, each one was laid away.
Though life is dreary and the days are gray
Will not the sunset's glory glow the West?
Though shadows deepen, hope is in my breast,
For starless nights must always end in day.
The God who gave me dreams is kind. Ah then!
Somehow, somewhere my dreams will live again.

THE MOTHER OF THE ROSE

I kneel on Holy Thursday with the faithful wor-
shipping
Where Christ is throned in splendor as the sac-
ramental King.

I ever will remember it, that wondrous full-
blown rose
Among the burning tapers on the altar of repose.

O blessed among roses all, to bloom in beauty
there,
To give your heart unto your God and in His
glory share.

* * * * *

In quiet fields beyond the town, near where the
river flows
There is a humble garden where a gentle rose-
tree grows.

Tonight Our Lord remembers on the altar of re-
pose
This rose-tree in the fields afar, the mother of
the rose.

FOREVER

To rest on summer eves upon the grass,
And watch the burning glories of the sky ;
To feel the soft caress of winds that pass
Cooled by the shining waters murmuring nigh ;
To nestle close to Nature's kindred heart,
And feel one's self of all the world a part.

To rest in darkened grave, 'neath cypress
bowers,
Upon a hillside sloping to the sea ;
To turn to clay and feed the roots of flowers ;
To rise on sunbeams to the clouds, and be
Life-giving rain, that many blessings yields
To fevered city streets and parchèd fields.

Past death and grave, the body will survive ;
Anew it lives in clay and cloud and flower ;
Since nothing dead is, is not that alive
That made of clay a God in life's brief hour ?
If matter lives, ah, surely spirit must ;
Shall dust have life, and spirit turn to dust ?

THE BURNING BUSH

Strange thoughts are ever in my mind,
Strange doubts that grieve me when I pray;
In faith I cannot comfort find,
And God seems very far away.
In days long dead He spoke to men,
O, would that I were living then!

A rose-tree in my garden grows,
Its perfume is as incense rare;
It bends with many a scarlet rose
That speaketh of a Presence there.
O, bright red lamps, you seem to say
That God is not so far away!

And so before my rose-tree bright
My sorrows and my doubts give way;
No longer twilight, gloom and night,
But sunrise, glory, and the day.
My garden walk His feet have trod;
This burning bush enshrines my God.

GOD ALONE

I drank the cup of human love and found
But tears of sorrow, dregs of bitterness.

Not this, not this, but something more profound.

To Intellect I bowed ; can Wisdom bless

By filling all my poor heart's emptiness?

The lonely roads of life I walked with Art ;

And Poetry with soothing, soft caress

My soul upraised above the sad world's mart ;

O God, dear God, all empty is my heart !

My soul was filled with longings to be spent
That other lives might drink the wine of joy.

In losing self I thought to find content,

By spreading gladness inward grief destroy.

Alas, there is no peace without alloy,

My soul is weary as the desert breeze,

What others have how can my heart enjoy?

There cometh ever o'er the restless seas

The music of far off eternities.

The flowers of youth have faded in my life,
Their scentless dust is scattered o'er my years.

I fought for heart-content, but vain the strife,
The struggle over, and I have but fears

That all my days in this sad vale of tears
Were idly spent, and I have missed the goal;

I hear the voice of judgment in my ears:
There is no heart-content, but where the soul
Has spurned life's all to find in God life's
whole.

THE TRANSFIGURATION

He seeks the mountains where the olives grow,
The Lord of Glory, veiled in humble guise;
His soul is shadowed with a coming woe,
The grief of all the world is in His eyes:
His spirit struggles in the dark caress
Of anguish, pain and utter loneliness.

He always loved the mountain tops, for there
Away from earth, He treads the mystic ways,
And sees the Vision of the Fairest Fair,
As Heaven dawns upon His raptured gaze;
The loneliness, the pain, the grief depart;
Surpassing gladness fills His Sacred Heart.

That day He stood upon the olive hill,
And Peter, James and John in wonder saw
The burning glories of the God-head fill
His soul with grandeur, and in holy awe
They fell upon the ground, and cried for grace,
Lest they should die beholding God's own Face.

As minor chords that sob from strings of gold
The Master speaks in accents sweet and sad:
The Vision past, the chosen three behold
No one but Jesus and their souls are glad.
The awe, the splendor and the glory gone,
How sweet the Face of Christ to look upon!

THE PRIEST

He drinks the chalice of the Lord,
Within whose mystic deep
Commingle with the wine of joy
The tears of all who weep.

IN THE CATHEDRAL

Before the Mass and ere the break of day,
Alone within the dark cathedral aisle
I prayed, and waited for the sun's first ray
To flood the chancel with its glorious smile,
I waited and my thoughts were sad the while.

O Orient, lift up your gates of light!
Let God the morning miracle renew.
In golden sunshine nave and apse grow bright,
The jewelled lancets burn and bring to view
Carved saints and angels in resplendent hue.

Arise, O Sun of Glory, Christ most dear!
Bring heavenly brightness and a radiance rare.
Like night-hours in that old cathedral drear
Our souls are darksome and of beauty bare,
Our only splendor is Thy Presence fair.

VOCATION

So delicately tender,
The creature of an hour,
Upon a mountain side it grew,
A gentle little flower.

It lived within the silence
Wherein its life was born ;
It blossomed in the twilight
And withered ere the morn.

Unknown it lived, unseen it died
Upon its lonely sod ;
But not in vain its little life
Before the Eyes of God.

OLD NUNS

Our Lady smiles on youthful nuns,
 She loves them well.
Our Lady's smile like sunshine floods
 Each convent cell,
But fondest falls Our Lady's smile
 Where old nuns dwell ;

Old nuns whose hearts are young with love
 For Mary's Son,
Old nuns whose prayers for faltering souls
 Have victory won,
Old nuns whose lives are beautiful
 With service done.

Their love a loveless world has saved
 From God's dread rod,
The paths where Sorrow walks with Sin
 Their feet have trod,
Their knees have worn the flags that pave
 The house of God.

Our Lady smiles on youthful nuns,
She loves them well ;
Our Lady's smile like sunshine floods
Each convent cell ;
But fondest falls Our Lady's smile
Where old nuns dwell.

THE ANNUNCIATION

The Blessed Virgin lowly bowed
To Gabriel's salutation,
And waited, peaceful as the host
Before its consecration,
Till God from heaven came down to her
In Love's supreme oblation.

A SWORD SHALL PIERCE

In early youth, ere sorrows came to me,
I had the thought that Mary should have died
Before was hers the woeful agony
That pierced her soul when Christ was crucified.
In later years, much sorrow makes me wise
To know the value of love's sacrifice.

And why should Simeon speak the dreadful
word
That I have sadly in the Gospels read,
To fill her soul with anguish ere her Lord,
A slaughtered lamb, on Calvary's altar bled?
Dark words of Simeon shadowing forth the
Cross!
Not in life's gain is joy, but in its loss.

The many happy hours my life has known
Were not the hours when self was satisfied ;
My gladdest days were those when I did moan
The grief another's heart had crucified.
I understand, the thought no more annoys,
The path of sorrow leads to endless joys.

HIS LAST HAIL MARY

The sounds of earth are dying in his ear,
 Fade pale and dim earth's visions in his eye,
Within his heart no struggle nor a fear,
 Upon his lips no sob or parting sigh;
And when they thought the hour of death was
 nigh,
He smiled and whispered: "Is my mother near?"
 Dear hands of love she laid upon his head:
 "My child, the Mother of God you need," she
 said.

She taught his baby lips to pray, and now
 His last Hail Mary falls upon her ears.
"Mother of God, O pray for me!" His brow
Reflects the glory of the eternal years.
 The Mother of God will dry his mother's tears.
"O Mother of God, pray for my son, O Thou,
 Pray for him now, thy son and mine," she
 cried,
 "And at his death!" He sighed "Amen," and
 died.

IN MEMORIAM

J. C. G.

I hold each life must end in gain.
Though passed in rustic, lonely ways,
Or in the city's dazzling blaze,
No life is ever lived in vain.

The infant dying ere the light;
Its little life of helpless pain,
Its little life is not in vain,
For aye an angel in God's sight.

The broken harps along the way,
The singers gone too soon to sleep,
The world its many millions weep
Who died before they had their day.

Though short or long, God knoweth best,
Though matters not when life is done,
We long to live till setting sun,
And die in glory of the West.

Unto thy soul be peace and bliss ;
For thy high life we render praise ;
Thy life so rich in deeds and days,
Its message to the world is this :

To higher things, with wings unfurled,
The soul must ever struggling soar,
Until it rests on heaven's floor,
Above the workshop of the world.

TO BENEDICT XV

1917

Is there no voice to speak in God's dread name,
No voice to war-mad nations crying "Cease"?
Where are the angels that on earth sang peace
That night of nights when God from heaven
came?

Grown silent now they bend their heads in shame
O'er war-swept lands where miseries increase.

"Time was, alas, that time has passed away,
When at the voice of him who holds the keys
Earth's kings and peoples falling on their knees
Would cease from war and God's forgiveness
pray."

Thus gentle Pius; and he died that day,
Sad day that dawned upon war's cruelties.

Speak, Benedict, from highest mountain peak,
For thine a vision is beyond our ken.
God's voice is in thine ears; the talk of men
Who, without wisdom, in the valleys speak,
Is but to thee a sound far off and weak.
Speak with that Voice that saves the world again!

A MOTHER'S FAITH

I hold the thought that God is just ;
Though all the fields of earth are red,
Though breaking hearts uncomforted
Go down in anguish to the dust.

I hold the thought that God is love ;
Though loveless all the world appears,
Though hate triumphant rules the years,
And dies the sun in heaven above.

In faith I bend beneath His will ;
Though He my dearest treasure takes,
The child He gave, whose passing makes
The music of my life grow still.

The Hand that strikes is kind, I know ;
With God at home, secure from harms,
My Ghio rests within His arms
Whose splendors blind the noon-day glow.

O, child of mine! on heavenly shore
One day united we shall stand,
Where thou dost smile with beckoning hand,
O child of mine forevermore!

A ROSE JAR

A breath, with incense laden
From the centuries afar;
The living soul of roses
Where the withered rose-leaves are.
She raised the antique cover
Of a century-olden jar.

HEART

He lived for gold, and in its ceaseless quest
His noblest talents spent ;
The world applauded, but the rich man's heart
Was filled with discontent.

He lived for pleasure, and its scarlet flowers
Were glorious on his breast ;
The world was smiling, but the flowers were
masks
To hide the heart's unrest.

He lived for glory, and he reached the heights
The great alone may tread ;
The world paid homage, but it gave no joy
To one with heart half dead.

He lived the life where Intellect is king,
Where Thought is ruled by Art ;
Above men's praise, he heard poor Goethe's cry,
"I only care for heart."

MEMORIES

The light of the dying sun
Is lingering in the west,
Awhile, when the day is done,
Till stars deck heaven's breast.

The soothing sob of the sea
Is heard, while tear drops start,
Afar on the listening lea,
Till comfort heals the heart.

The grace of a kindly deed
In after years of grief,
The heart of a man may feed
With thoughts that bring relief.

A garland of roses rare,
The gift of friends that part;
When the rose is no longer there
The perfume fills the heart.

The memory of a song
Outlives the singer's breath,
And Love through the ages long
Survives the lover's death.

FRANCIS THOMPSON

He built a mystic temple with his song ;
Within its sanctuary he, its priest,
In vestments gorgeous as the dawning East
Held festival. The world, expectant long,
For such a temple and for such a feast,
Came as a ministering acolyte,
With glorious service for the sacred rite.

The jewelled whiteness of the mountain snow,
The golden-glory glow of noon-day sun,
The varied tints that blend in heaven's bow,
Into a sacerdotal robe he spun.
Behind the clouds, the moon, a veiled nun,
In cloistered stall chants praise the night-hours
long
Within the temple built by Thompson's song.

Before its altar, high, serene, apart—
Where ever burn the sacrificial fires
Which are the hungered cravings of the heart,
The anguished longings of the world's desires,
The soul's supremest thoughts when heaven
inspires ;—

The poet stood in priestly robes ornate
His House of Beauty there to dedicate.

Then came the blessings of the morning's mist,
The sheen of stars, the incense of the flowers,
Orchestral music of the woodland bowers,
Swept by the wind, the ancient organist.

O splendid fane, complete from base to towers,
Where Truth and Beauty are as heart to heart,
And Thompson weds again the Church to Art!

VALE!

Good night, sweet world, good night!

I love not heaven less

Because my heart has found delight

In earthly loveliness.

Good bye, sweet world, good bye!

When heavenly joys begin,

If for the olden joys I sigh

It will not be a sin.

Farewell, sweet world, farewell!

And every little while

I'll look from where in heaven I dwell

On thee to fondly smile.

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